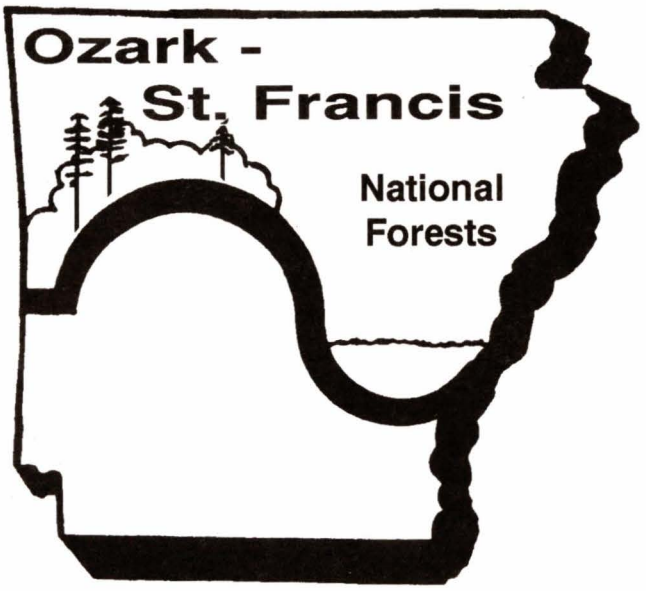
.R8

MASTER COPY
INFOSouth
MONTHLY ALERT
MONTH April 95
ITEM # 7
CIRCULATION - 3 DAYS

Ozark-St. Francis National Forests
General Report to the Public for 1992

IMPORTANT!
IF THIS ITEM IS LOST IN THE MAIL,
RETURN TO: USDA FOREST SERVICE
INFOSouth
Science Library, Room 496
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602

General Report to the Public



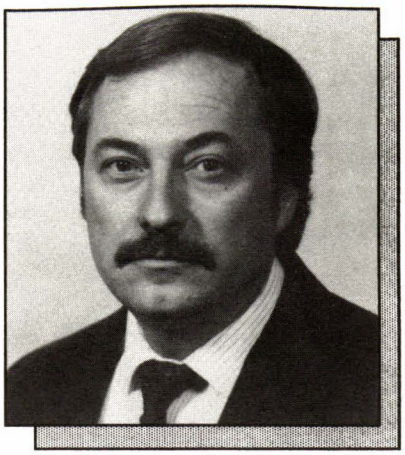
A look at the Accomplishments and Programs affecting the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests.

Fiscal Year 1992

(October 1, 1991-September 30, 1992)

Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

Supervisor's Corner



Dear Friends of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests:

We, the men and women of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests know we are working for you, our "shareholders" and "customers" as we care for your public lands. We strive to be good neighbors and to meet your needs in fair, friendly and open ways. We are sensitive to the effects of our decisions on you and your land. We extend a special thanks to our many partners across Arkansas who have worked with us over the past year.

This forth annual report to you the "shareholders" of the National Forests will highlight some of these partnerships, as well as provide a brief look as some of the projects and programs implemented on the Forest over the past year.

More partnerships than ever were formed during Fiscal Year 1992. The Friends of Lake Wedington, Scenic 7 Partners, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Friends of White Rock, Arkansas Tech University, Arkansas State Parks, Yell County Wildlife Federation, Stone County Optimists Club, Quail Unlimited, Paris Rotary Club, Clarksville Kiwanis Club, and several other civic organizations are among the many folks who joined with the Ozark-St. Francis to preserve, promote or enhance some part of the Forest. Partnerships with researchers were also strengthened in 1992. Forming partnerships like these will be one of the keys to making ecosystem management work.

Ecosystem management is a management philosophy recently adopted by the entire National Forest System. It simply means that Forest managers will use an ecological approach to multiple use management as we produce desired resource values, uses, products and services that will achieve the greatest benefits for the American people. We recognize that the parts of a given ecosystem are interconnected and are committed to sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of each ecosystem.

There is a lot yet to be learned about what the application of ecosystem management will really mean to the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. We have projects on all districts that are putting ecosystem management on the ground. One of the keys to making ecosystem management work is involvement and partnerships among forest managers, the interested public and researchers. We welcome your assistance.

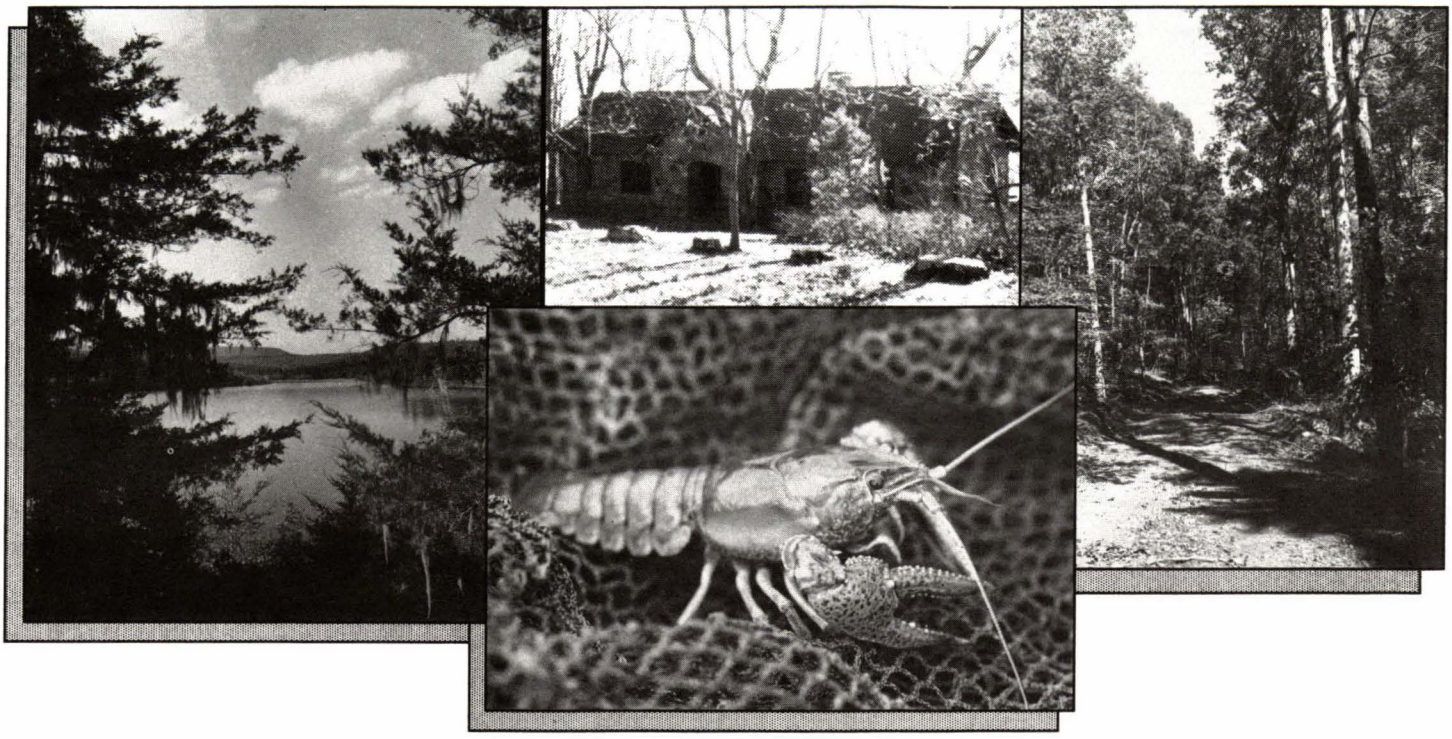
I encourage each of you to get involved with forest management plans and activities. I have included a comment sheet on the last page of this report. Fill it out. Let me know what you are thinking. Also, if you should have any questions regarding our management accomplishments as shared in this report or would like to become a partner with the Ozark-St. Francis, come by or call. We will be happy to answer any of your questions.

Thanks again for your interest in the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Lynn C. Neff

Forest Supervisor



RESOURCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Striking a Balance

The National Forests and Grasslands are one of America's finest natural treasures. Stretching from Maine to California, and Alaska to Puerto Rico, the 156 National Forests contain 191 million acres of an astonishing diversity of land, water, vegetation, wildlife and outdoor recreation.

These forests are more than picture-post card images, they are working landscapes, multi-purpose lands for a multi-faceted, ever changing society.

The multiple-use nature of the National Forests is what separates them from the National Parks. Both are part of America's public land system, but differ in philosophy and purpose. The National Parks are managed predominantly for scenic values, recreation and wildlife. On the National Forests, the resources -- timber, range, minerals, water, wildlife and recreation are managed in compatible and sustainable ways to generate the greatest benefits for the American people.

The National Forests and Grasslands are places where intensive efforts are being made to manage our natural resources in an economically efficient, environmentally safe and socially responsible manner. National Forests have proven to be an excellent use of our public lands.

Striking a balance among the various uses of the National Forests takes careful planning, professional decision making and public participation and awareness.

The following pages list the accomplishments for the past year in recreation, timber, soil, water, air quality, land acquisitions, wildlife, fisheries and facilities. Plus, they include a summary of the Monitoring and Evaluation Report and Timber Sale Report.

If you have any questions about this information, feel free to contact the Supervisor's Office in Russellville, (501) 968-2354.

Blanchard Springs Caverns had another good year and provided guided tours for over 100,000 visitors. Some of the major maintenance to the area in 1992 included reroofing, carpet, furniture, painting, sewage and air conditioning systems, landscaping and signing.

You Don't Know What You're Missin'!

Recreating on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

From the rock outcrop, you can see a deep blue sky, speckled with white clouds. A red-headed woodpecker flies by and lands in a nearby tree. The wind blowing through the forest below sounds like waves of water rolling onto a beach. Ideas scattered in your mind start to become clearer and problems less important. If you've ever hiked, floated or ridden through the Ozark or St. Francis National Forests, you know these sights and feelings. If you haven't, well...you don't know what you're missing.

Hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, floating, kayaking, water skiing, camping, swimming, hunting, fishing, and four-wheeler riding are just some of the things people like to do while visiting the forest. Not every recreation area, trail or wilderness provide all things for all people, but each provides opportunities to observe nature as few places can.

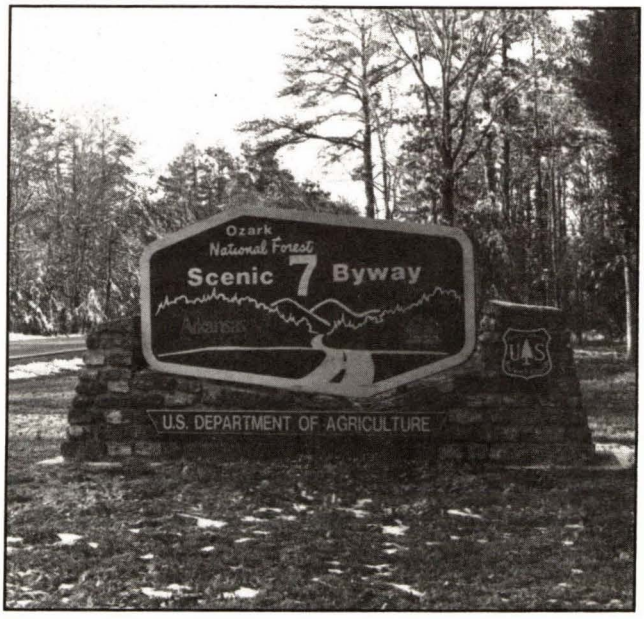
Over the past year, the forest has seen several changes in the area of recreation. Some of these changes occurred as a result of a national initiative or simply an improvement to a popular area. A lot of these changes came about because of the help of partners. These are people outside theForest Service who want to do something for their community and for the forest. Through volunteer time and money, these people helped the forest accomplish a great number of things.

People, Partners and Plans

The Scenic 7 Byway partners and the work they did to promote tourism along Highway 7 is a prime example of state and federal agencies working together with community and civic organizations toward a common goal. Their work was recognized at a national conference on tourism with the "Award of Excellence" for their outstanding "contributions to developing tourism and recreation on America's federal lands and for creating innovative partnerships at the local, state and federal levels." The Scenic 7 Partners worked together to increase tourism in the state along Highway 7, thereby bringing more tourism money to the economy of local towns and businesses along the route.

The Friends of Lake Wedington is another example of an excellent partnership with the forest. Over the past three years, the Friends of Lake Wedington were the major drivers in the preservation of the historic qualities around the lake. They also encourage recreational use of the area and strive to make the area accessible for everyone.

In April 1992 the Friends, in coordination with the Forest Service, held a dedication ceremony for the restored 1930's WPA vintage cabins and lodge at Lake Wedington. Features were added to the



This specially designed sign marks the beginning of the Scenic 7 Byway .

The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed state park on Mt. Magazine was completed. The final is expected to be released in March 1993. At that time a decision will be made naming the preferred alternative which outlines the level of development that can occur on the mountain.

lodge and one of the cabins to make it easy for a wheelchair to move through them. In June 1992, Miss Wheelchair America, Deanna Greene VanHook, paid the Friends a visit to attend a luncheon in her honor and to check out the new facilities. The Friends also aided in the construction of a new accessible wooden fishing pier. Many thanks go to these hard working people.

Rivers Enter "Hall of Fame"

Segments of Big Piney Creek, Buffalo River, Mulberry River, Hurricane, North Sylamore and Richland Creeks became part of the river "hall of fame" when President Bush signed the Arkansas Wild and Scenic Rivers Act on May 22, 1992. These rivers now have certain legal protections and provide a way for the Forest Service to manage the river resource. The principal effect of the act is to limit the construction of dams and other water resources projects that might affect the free flowing nature of the river and its other resources. Since these rivers are located on National Forest lands, the Forest Service will have specific responsibilities to ensure the values for which the river was designated are protected. Some examples of these responsibilities include:

- ✔ Developing a river management plan which includes establishing a protective corridor along each river.
- ✔ Managing the federally owned lands within the river corridor.
- ✔ Controling recreation use on the rivers, if necessary, to maintain river qualities.

The process for determining the protective corridors for the Mulberry River, Buffalo, Richland and Hurricane Creeks has started. The formal establishment of these corridors as well as the corridors for Big Piney and North Sylamore Creeks will occur sometime in 1993. The public will be kept informed through news articles about the progress of this process. In some areas, public meetings will be held.

Wilderness

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests have started a nine-step process to determine how much change is acceptable in Wilderness. Obtaining public input is a key part of this Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process .

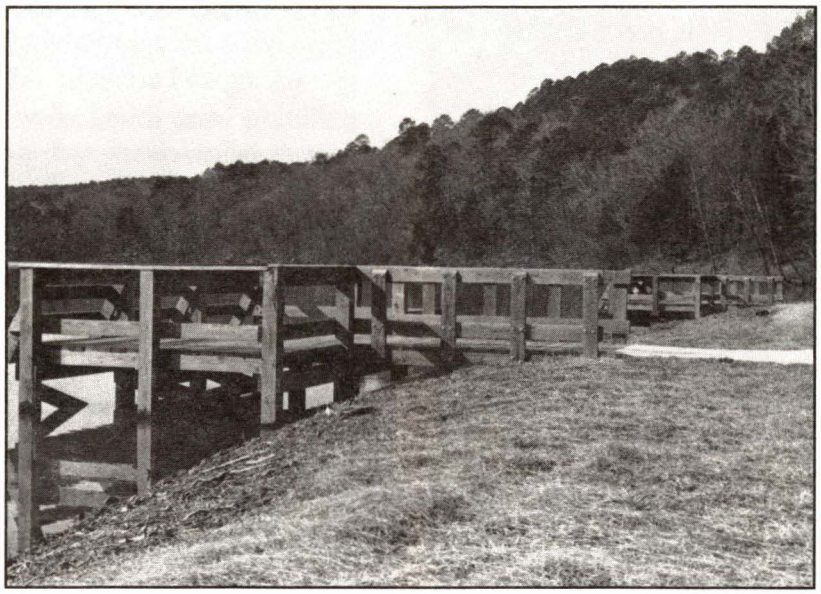
Once the process is completed, managers will closely watch the Wildernesses to make sure the conditions fit within the determined frame-

work for each location. The areas affected are the Upper Buffalo, Hurricane, Richland, East Fork and Leatherwood Wildernesses.

New Places to Hike and Horse Around

Forest visitors who like hiking around White Rock Mountain, north of Ozark, Arkansas, should plan a trip to the new 15-mile loop trail. This trail is part of the Ozark Highlands Trail linking Shores Lake to White Rock. A group of Student Conservation Association participants and the Ozark Highlands Trail Association helped build portions of the trail.

For those who prefer to do their hiking from horseback, a new 58-mile horse trail has been completed near Mountain View. At the trail head of the Sylamore Horse Trail, riders find parking, hitch rails, an information board and a wheelchair accessible horse ramp. From the trail head, four loops, which mostly follow low-use roads, expose riders to a variety of terrain and scenic values. Riders cross streams and travel along ridges, as well as the White River.



Shores Lake now has a new accessible fishing pier, bathhouse, picnic pavilion and swim beach improvements.

An 80-mile horse trail and camp is in the planning stages in the Jasper area. When this trail is completed, it will be the fourth horse trail established within the Ozark National Forest. The other two are Huckleberry Mountain Horse Trail on Mt. Magazine outside Paris and Moccasin Gap Horse Trail off Highway 7, north of Russellville.

Trail Guides, maps and creepy, crawly books

When venturing into the woods, people want to know what they are seeing or where they are going. The Ozark Interpretive Association (OIA) is just the organization to help them out. The Ozark Interpretive Association is a non-profit organization that sells a variety of field guides, educational materials and maps. The OIA outlets are located in Forest Service offices, Corps of Engineers offices, State Parks offices and several private businesses scattered across Arkansas. The OIA plans to increase the number of outlets.

Proposals for new sales outlets have been made to the St. Francis National Forest in eastern Arkansas, the National Forests in Texas and Mississippi and Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge. If these proposals are accepted and new outlets established, the OIA will expand from 32 sales outlets to around 43 in 1993.

Profits made from the materials sold at the OIA outlets are used for additional books, maps and/or projects relating to interpretation and education.

Sure-As-Shootin'

More people than ever are visiting the shooting range north of Clarksville on the Pleasant Hill Ranger District. Six additional benches were added to the facility, doubling its capacity. The facility now provides for both rifle and pistol use. Paper targets are clipped to a wire mesh fence located 100 feet from the benches. The range is open only during daylight hours. The high use and demand for such a facility lead to its expansion. Future plans for the area include, a new restroom and water system.

How to Become a Partner

There are numerous ways for people to get involved with the Forest Service. There are programs for volunteers, for cost-sharing projects and for forming partnerships to accomplish mutual goals. Thousands of people each year work with the Forest Service to help improve, enhance or protect the forest in some way.

If you would like to become a Forest Service partner, please contact one of the offices listed on the back page of this report.

Protecting the Basics

The basics of all life is earth, air and water. Protection, even enhancment of these resources is an important part of the Forest Service mission.

Soil, Water and Air

In 1992, soil specialists for the Ozark-St Francis National Forests discovered high amounts of erosion occurring on Frog Bayou which is part of the Boston Mountain Ranger District. Cattle and all-terrain vehicles were compacting the shoreline causing erosion along the Bayou.

Three miles of fencing were installed along the banks of Frog Bayou to prevent cattle and all terrain vehicles from disturbing the stream bank. This strengthened the stream banks and prevented further erosion along 10 acres. Next year, seeding and fertilizing will be done on severely disturbed areas to speed up the restoration process.

This may sound insignificant, but protection of the water, soil and air resources of our National Forests is a basic requirement for Forest Service land managers. The fate of our forests and other natural resources is linked to the health of our rivers, lakes and streams. Monitoring the water, soil and air is the best way to measure the effects of land management activities on these aquatic resources. With information from monitoring, land managers can take action to better protect and improve our watersheds, and their beneficial uses.

Careful administration of land-disturbing activities and application of protective conservation practices ensure the high quality of surface water and ground water from National Forest system lands.

Long-term monitoring and periodic sampling of soil and water provide information to adjust management practices that ensure the continued productivity of the lands. One of the many responsibilities of the soil scientist is to collect, analyze and map basic soils and landscape information to accurately assess land capability and suitability. By doing this he can evaluate the impact of various types of disturbances on the soil.

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are committed to maintaining or enhancing soil productivity and water quality on the forests. State defined guidelines, called Best Management Practices, are followed to reduce the amount of non-point source water pollution and soil erosion that could be caused by various types of projects.

This year, monitoring was done in ten harvested timber stands as well as field reviews on many other projects to check for problems. The results of this monitoring indicated that overall, the state guidelines were being followed and were effective in preventing soil erosion. Also, no obvious forms of pollution were found after monitoring some of the forest's lakes, rivers and streams.

These bodies of water are not the only areas tested when dealing with water. Watersheds are also studied. A watershed is the entire area that drains into a single outlet such as a river, river system or body of water. A watershed can range from a few acres to tens of thousands of acres.

In 1992, inventorying of over 21,000 acres of a watershed was completed. This inventory includes information that will help forest managers decide what kind of activities should or should not take place in each watershed. This information includes identifying the types of soil in the area, the conditions of stream channels and recording the type of habitats found around the streams.

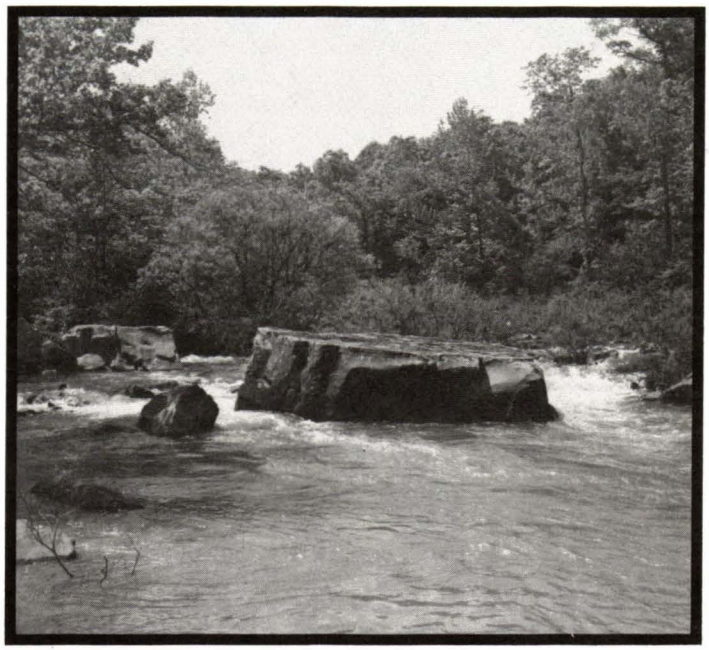
Field reviews conducted by current soil, water and air staff revealed some projects did not adequately consider the effects of the project on certain watershed values or the effects were not adequately documented. Several methods to correct these problems are being discussed. When the best methods are chosen, action will be taken to correct these problems.

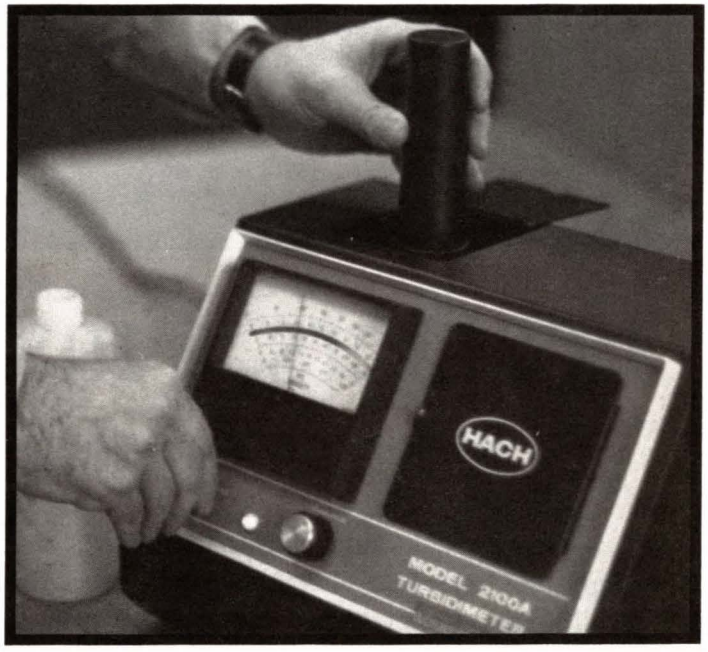
To aid in the enhancement of certain watersheds, work was done to improve the condition of 44 acres located within various watersheds. This includes controlling erosion, obliterating old roads and stabilizing streambanks and gullies.

Turbidity - An excellent indicator of water quality. *In natural waters, turbidity /tur-bid-ity/ or cloudiness of water is caused by particles of clay, silt, finely divided organic and inorganic matter, soluble colored organic compounds and plankton or other microscopic organisms. High amounts of these particles, can cause poor water quality.*

Hydrologists use an instrument called a turbidimeter to test samples of water from the forest. The water is put in a test tube then inserted into the turbidimeter. A light shield is then placed over the opening to prevent outside light from interfering with the test. Once in the machine, light is used to measure the number of particles in the sample. It reflects differently based on the size and shape of the particles. The meter on the front of the machine registers the amount of light scattered by the particle. Often, hydrologists can use the results to identify specific particles in the water and possible causes of pollution.

The photos below show a turbidimeter in use.



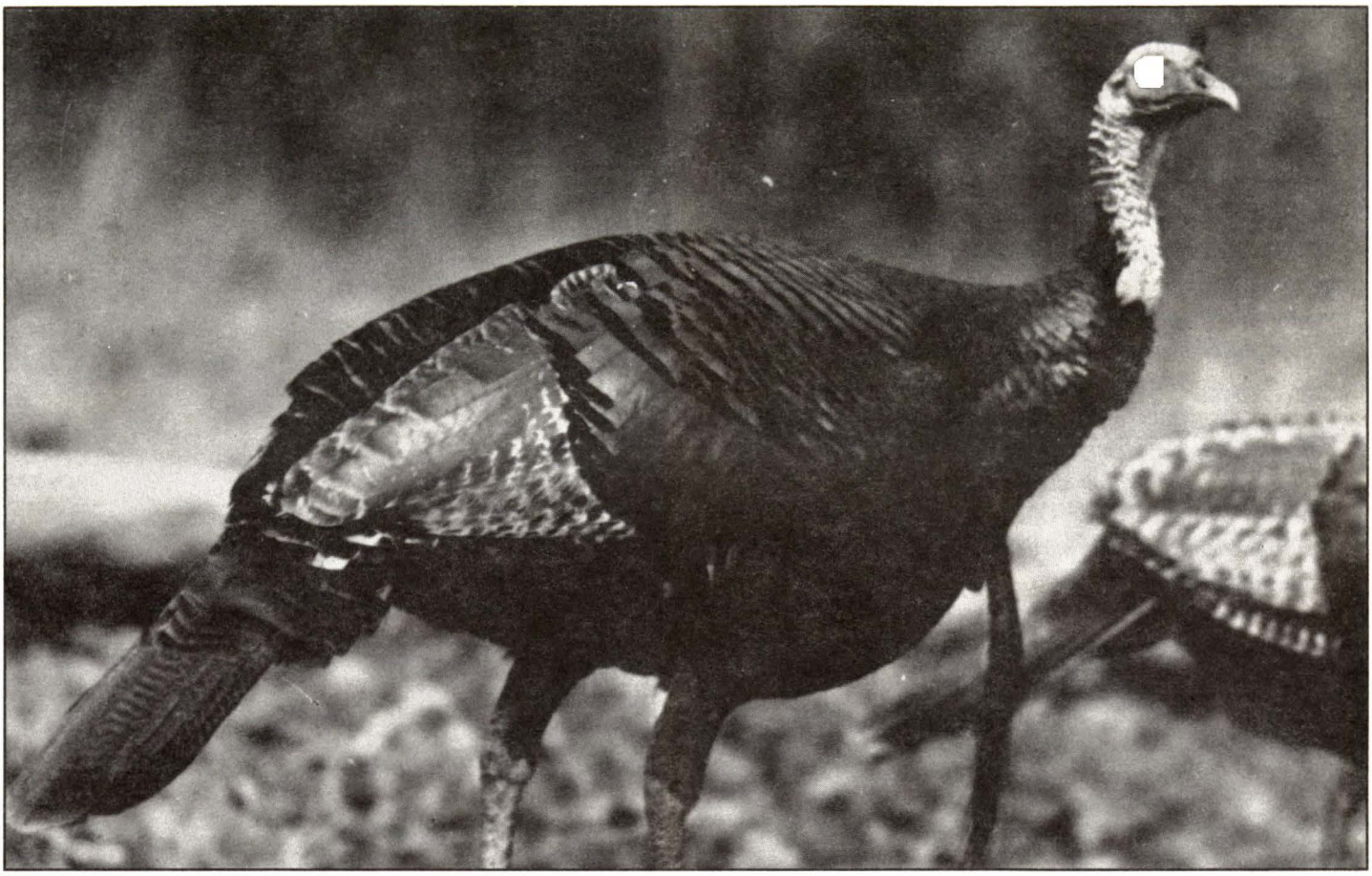


Air Monitoring - In an effort to protect the visibility and other air quality values of the Upper Buffalo Wilderness Area from significant deterioration, the Interagency Monitoring of PROtected Visual Environments, IMPROVE, System was installed near Deer, Ark.

The monitoring equipment, a sampler, will automatically collect three samples of fine air particles and one sample of breathable particles twice a week. Each of the samples collected will be examined for particle weight, optical absorption, chemical composition and for amounts of nitrate, organic carbon and elemental carbon. Knowing what's in the air will help determine the origin of any pollution.

The information collected from the IMPROVE system will be combined with the data collected by the automatic camera visual monitor that has been in use since 1988 to help provide better monitoring of the air quality of the Upper Buffalo Wilderness Area.

In 1991 monitoring was started to determine if there is any ozone damage to the Upper Buffalo Wilderness. This survey uses blackberry plants, located around the borders of the Wilderness. These plants react in different ways to specific types of ozone damage. In 1992, the blackberry plants showed no indication of ozone. Discussions were started between the Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology and the forests to continue monitoring for ozone damage by installing and operating ozone monitoring equipment at Deer, Ark.



Feathers, Fins, Fur and Fields

Managing wildlife, fisheries and range for future generations

From the cute and cuddly to the slippery and slimy, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests have it all. Bear, deer, rabbit, turkey, ducks, robins, cardinals, bass, catfish, and crawfish are only a few of the creatures that make their home in the forest.

Over the past year, several projects were started to improve the quality of living for these friends of the forest as well as studies of and searches for rare and endangered species.

Over 1,600 acres of the forest received some sort of improvement in 1992 specifically to benefit wildlife. These projects were aimed at improving one or more of the three parts of habitat -- food, water and/or shelter. The habitats for both game and non-game species of birds and animals as well as fish were considered and targeted. These activities ranged from prescribed burning and wildlife opening development to increase the amount and quality of food available for wildlife to building ponds that supply a source of water during drought conditions.

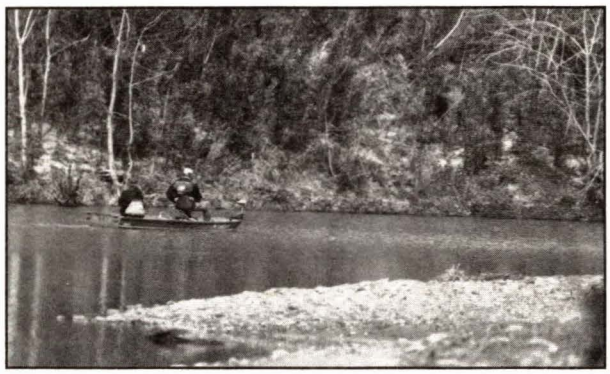
Turner Bend and Walker Mountain Wildlife Areas are getting a new twist. Plans are being made to expand Turner Bend Wildlife Demonstration Area into an interpretive stop. Signs explaining the area and the type of wildlife that visit are what folks driving along Scenic Highway 23 might see in 1993. Plans for Walker Mountain include expanding it into a environmental education area. A place where teachers can take their students to view not only wildlife, but to study plants and to see some areas of Ozark heritage.

Fisheries activities on the Forest in 1992 included the construction of 11 additional ponds. Projects such as adding fish cover where needed and liming and fertilizing certain ponds to maximize fish production were done to keep existing ponds in the best possible shape. In addition to the structural improvements made for the fisheries program, over 200,000 catfish, bluegill, redear and bass were

stocked in forest ponds and lakes to add to existing populations and to establish fish populations in new or renovated lakes and ponds.

Over 1,300 children participated in the "Fifth Annual - Take A Youth Fishing Derby" sponsored at eleven sites across the Forest. Held on National Fishing Day, the derby attracts kids from all across Arkansas. Local businesses, civic organizations, communities work with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Forest Service to give the kids a memorable experience on their public lands. It's the cooperative effort of these people that attributes to the success of the program.

Although rather small compared to the Range programs in the West, the Range program here is very productive. In 1992, over 250 acres of existing pasture land on the Forest was improved. In addition, over 4 miles of fence and 5 ponds were constructed to provide water sources for livestock and wildlife. This will also protect streams from erosion due to livestock grazing.



Anglers enjoy fishing for bass, crappie and catfish on the hundreds of streams and several lakes located on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests.

Areas where native species of prairie grass is grown is one of the many sites visitors to the Walker Mountain Environmental Education Area will see.

Habitat Improvement Project

Have you ever wondered what it means to "improve wildlife habitat?" Well, to help answer this question, an example of a six-year wildlife improvement project started on the Sylamore Ranger District in 1991 will show what types of things can be done to an area over time to improve habitat for a certain species of wildlife.

This project started in a series of old fields totaling 231 acres. The objective of the project was to rehabilitate or improve existing fields for use by all forms of wildlife, but specifically to increase quail populations.

The project would take approximately six years to complete and would involve work being done in cooperation with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, volunteers, and various organizations.

The decline in quail populations in the area was attributed to the loss of fields for habitats. Improving these old fields should allow for quail populations to increase, as well as many other wildlife species. Some of the things that can be done to improve or restore various types of habitats will be bushhogging, prescribed burning, discing, seeding, fertilizing, and establishing hay fields.

In 1991, 20 acres were planted in sunflowers for song and game birds, 25 acres were disced and seeded in wheat and clover and 28 acres were bushhogged. Continuing the project in 1992, 52 acres were prescribed burned, 15 acres had limited dozer work and 20 acres were fertilized and planted in sunflower, milo and Korean Lespedeza.

An increase in dove populations is a result of this work. Wildlife biologists anticipate similar increases in quail populations as time, funding and cooperative work continues into the future.

In 1993, a proposed agreement with Quail Unlimited would improve 26 acres by discing, seeding of native grasses and fertilizing as well as establish 32 acres of hay fields for cutting.

Cost of the proposed agreement to the Forest Service would be $1,750 and $ 3,300 for cooperators. Public response to this type of project has been very high.

Tomorrow's Forests Begin Today

A look at forest management on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

Forest management activities on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are designed to protect watersheds, provide habitat for wildlife and give variety to the landscape while providing raw materials for local industry and communities. Emphasis is being placed not only on caring for all aspects of the environment, but also on meeting the basic needs of people and communities that depend on the land for food, fuel, shelter, livelihood, recreation and spiritual renewal.

To meet society's changing needs, and the increased demands placed on the forests, today's National Forests are managed with today AND tomorrow in mind. Developing an understanding of what the public wants while maintaining healthy forests is critical. Careful analysis, planning and forecasting of conditions is essential in managing today's forests to better provide for future needs.

Over two-thirds of the 1.2 million-acre Ozark-St. Francis National Forests is covered with various types of hardwoods with the remaining one-third generally covered with pines. About ten percent of the forest is older than eighty years, eighty percent of the forest is between forty and eighty years old and ten percent is younger than age forty.

Of the total forest, 744,200 acres (65%) are considered suitable for some type of timber management activities. Of course, timber management activities take place on only a small portion of the suitable acres in any one year. In Fiscal Year 1992, for instance, various forms of timber management activities took place on 6,305 acres of the forest. The application of good timber management practices (i.e. removal of diseased, insect-infested, mature and overcrowded trees) benefits these timbered acres and maintains a healthy forest. The remaining 35% of the forest is located in Wilderness Areas, trail corridors, special interest areas, research natural areas, river corridors or simply on terrain too steep to harvest timber.

In providing healthy, productive forests, stands

of trees are regenerated by either encouraging natural regeneration or by planting trees. Some areas required regeneration because they were damaged by storms, insects or disease. Other stands needed to be regenerated because they were harvested in the regular timber sale program.

During Fiscal Year 1992, 3,863 acres of forest were regenerated. This total is less than one percent of the forest's acres. About 2,008 acres were hardwood stands that regenerated naturally by seeds falling from the trees or by sprouting. Shortleaf pine was planted on 1,855 acres where mature pine stands had been harvested.

To maintain healthy, productive forests, various timber stand improvement treatments are applied to control competing vegetation. During Fiscal Year 1992, 1,038 acres were treated to improve growing conditions in new stands. In addition, 6,344 acres of overly-dense young stands were thinned to promote the growth of healthy trees.

Timber harvested from the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests -- which in Fiscal Year 1992 totaled 32.7 million board feet, valued at $2,511,218 -- stimulates the economy and provides employment and support for county school and road programs.

Over 350 jobs and $6,787,000 were generated locally by the Forest's timber program. (More detailed information about the annual costs, revenues, resource benefits and local community effects of the forest's timber sale program can be found on page 18 of this report.)

Foresters basically look at three things when deciding whether an area should be harvested: 1. the management goal for the area identified in the Forest Plan; 2. the health of the trees; and 3. the productivity of the land. Once an area is identified to be harvested, an in depth analysis is done to determine what techniques will be used and how much timber can be harvested from an area while still maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

Various types of cutting methods are used to harvest timber. Shelterwood cuts remove 40-60% of the trees in an area. Thinnings remove trees of various sizes, dispersed throughout the forest. Group selection cuts remove small groups of trees in one-quarter acre to one acre sizes. Clearcutting removes all the trees in a stand in one cut, except trees reserved for special purposes such as wildlife habitat. Seedtree cutting removes most of the trees in one cut, leaving a few, well-spaced, good seed producing trees to restock the area.

Over the past five years, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests have been moving away from clearcutting. In 1992, 1,211 acres were clearcut compared to 4,947 acres in 1988. As a result of the reduced clearcutting acres, group selection acres have increased from 30 acres in 1988 to 5,014 acres in 1992. This is in line with the new ecosystem approach to forest management recently initiated by the Chief of the Forest Service, F. Dale Robertson.

Wood harvested from the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests often stays in the area providing lumber for homes and furniture.

Along Piney Creek, near Longpool Recreation Area, several key tracts were added to the Ozark National Forest.

Real Estate Management Acquires Key Tracts

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests have an active land adjustment program that is guided by the principle of being a good neighbor and respecting the rights of private landowners. This program includes both exchanging and purchasing land.

The first priority in land adjustment is to use the land exchange program. There are some public lands that could be best suited as private and visa-versa. These are the lands that are used to exhange with private landowners. Land exchanges are made on the basis of equal land value, not acre for acre.

Land purchases are made from willing sellers who desire to sell their property to the Forest Service for the use and enjoyment of the public. Emphasis is being placed on obtaining private lands within Wilderness boundaries, recreation composite, rare and endangered species and sensitive watershed protection tracts.

In 1992, the Ozark-St. Francis purchased 2,864 acres and optioned another 11,600 acres which will be reported as accomplished in 1993 and 1994. These acquisitions include tracts along the Scenic 7 Byway, Wild and Scenic Rivers, dispersed recreation, as well as inholding tracts (private lands within Forest Service boundary). Forest managers expect to find various threatened and endangered species and heritage resource sites on these tracts. An inventory of these areas will need to be done to verify these expectations.

In addition, 15 right-of-ways were acquired in fiscal year 1992. Acquiring public access rights over private land to public National Forest land and resources is a major task for forest land managers.

There are several issues associated with the right-of-way program: encumbering private land, public littering and vandalism, expensive acquisition costs and in some cases prohibitive costs, absolute denial of access and the exclusive use of public lands by adjacent landowner(s). In the majority of cases, the National Forest can resolve these issues through negotiation and management of the right-of-way. Land adjustment (land exchange and land purchase) is also used to improve public access to public land.

Engineers Support All Resource Areas

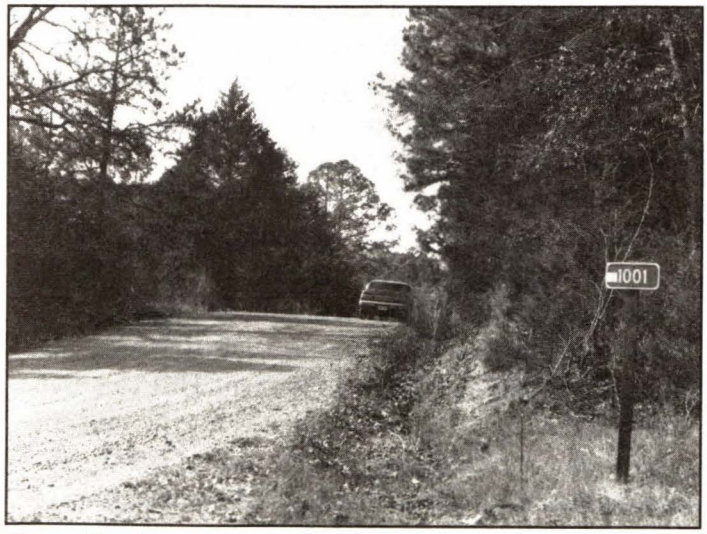
The Forest Service provides, operates and maintains numerous facilities to serve users of the National Forest while at the same time be compatible with the environment. These facilities include buildings, dams, roads and utility systems. Services are also provided for land surveying, mapping and aerial photography.

Office Addition

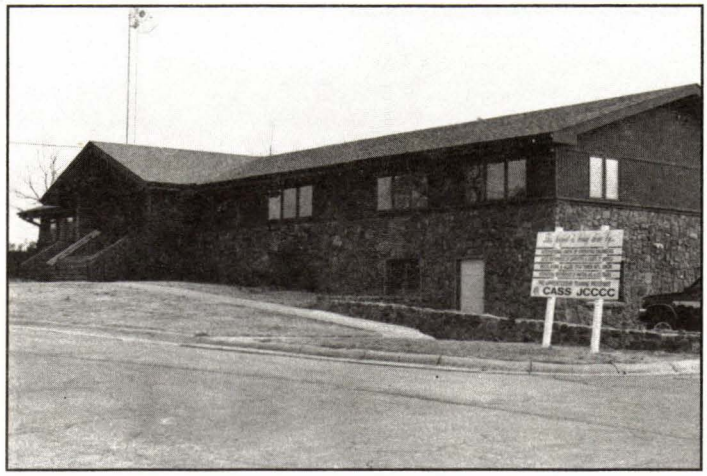
Personnel of the Boston Mountain Ranger District moved into the new office addition completed by students from the Cass Civilian Conservation Center as a part of the Vocational Skills Training program. While it has taken several years, this addition would not have happened if it were not for this program.

Mapping

Field editing of the Secondary Base Series (1/2" = 1 mile, Administrative Map) was completed. These edits have been sent to the Geometronics Service Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, for processing. The new map is expected about February 1994.



Granny Gap Road, Forest Road 1001, takes forest travelers through the Ozark Nationl Forest north of Russellville.



New Addition to the Boston Mountain Ranger District Office located in Ozark, Arkansas.

Roads

An inventory of forest roads was completed and rough draft copies of quadrangle maps prepared. The process to finalize the maps will take approximately seven years. Some maps should be available for purchase as early as 1994.

Seventy-six miles of roads were reconstructed/constructed, and of those, 51 miles are planned for closure after resource activities are completed. The typical closure device will be a dirt mound, as is the case on most closed roads around the Forest.

A contract was awarded for the construction of an 88 foot clear span timber bridge across Big Shoal Creek on the Magazine Ranger District. This is believed to be one of the longest, if not the longest, timber bridge in the nation. It is part of the nationwide effort to demonstrate the usefulness of timber as an alternative material for bridges. The bridge will replace a natural ford crossing that had become unsafe for current and future traffic.

Dams

In spring 1992, the outlet gates and lift mechanism on the Spring Lake Dam malfunctioned. After the recreation season was over, the gate was opened to lower the lake and enable inspection. Repair work is expected to be completed in 1993.

Cooperating Counties

Nine project agreements were made with five counties to cooperatively improve roads or sections of roads of mutual interest to both the County and the Forest Service. These counties were Conway, Logan, Newton, Pope and Van Buren.

Holding over 3,000 gallons of fire retardant, the Orion P-3A air tanker assists firefighters with wildfire suppression.

Fighting Wildfires

An important part of protecting National Forest lands

Fighting wildfires, providing disaster relief, conducting fire prevention programs and supervising prescribed burning are all part of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest's fire management program.

During Fiscal Year 1992, personnel from the forest assisted in putting out over 75 wildfires that burned 510 acres of the Forest plus 293 acres of adjoining private land. Ozark-St. Francis National Forests employees also assisted in disaster relief efforts following Hurricane Andrew in Florida and Louisiana and fire control efforts in the western states.

In addition, over 300 people were dispatched through the recently built Ft. Smith Staging Area. These included people from federal and state agencies in Arkansas and Oklahoma as well as Native American fire crews, student crews from Cass Civilian Conservation Center and Arkansas Tech University.

Across the Forest, 3,937 acres were prescribed burned under carefully planned conditions to achieve resource management objectives such as wildlife habitat improvement, unwanted fuel reduction, seedbed preparation and range improvements.

Arkansas Tech University students and faculty are very important partners in our fire management program. Through a cooperative agreement with the University, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests provide training to students who then serve as back-up crews to assist in prescribed burning operations as well as wildland fire suppression.

Proposed Projects Released Quarterly

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests provide advance notice to the public of proposed actions and projects to be conducted on the forest.

"We want to give those people who are interested in and affected by management decisions a chance to become involved in the decision making process of the forest," said Lynn Neff, forest supervisor.

Every three months, a list of proposed and continuing projects and actions will be issued. This list identifies the name and type of proposal (including timber sales, land exchanges, wildlife habitat improvements and recreation development), the location and status of each project and lists tentative dates for beginning and completing environmental studies and documentation.

The list of projects will automatically be mailed to people who have already shown an interest in national forest activities. To get on this mailing list or to see if you are already on the mailing list, contact the Forest's Planning Section, (501) 968-2354.

GIS Update

Geographic Information System, GIS, is a computer technology system that the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are developing to make forest maps. These are not conventional kinds of maps, but thematic maps that attempt to clarify users' understanding of the natural resources situation with which they must deal. For example, if a wildlife biologist wanted to know where the best habitat for a particular species is located, this person could enter the habitat type into the computer which would produce a map locating the habitat and giving information about it.

Developing GIS is a long process divided into several phases: preparing, digitizing, editing, updating, producing and analyzing data. The Ozark-St. Francis has been working on this project for over two years. The Buffalo and St. Francis Districts are in the updating phase; the Bayou, Pleasant Hill and Sylamore Ranger Districts are expected to complete the preparation and digitizing by the end of 1993; the Boston Mountain District will start the preparation of data next year; and the Magazine District will start GIS preparation in 1994.

Schools and Roads Receive $778,776.35

The Payment Act of 1908 established the practice of making 25% Return Payments to the counties that contain National Forest lands, grasslands or land utilization projects.

Each year the Forest Service calculates the total amount of revenues collected for the use of national forest, grasslands and land utilization projects for timber sales, grazing, recreation, special uses, minerals and land leases. Twenty-five percent of this total is then paid back to the states.

The state treasurer is responsible for dividing this payment proportionally among the counties that contain National Forest lands to be used specifically for public schools and roads.

The amount returned to counties for revenues collected during Fiscal Year 1992 are much lower than in the past. For example, 25% of the total revenues from timber went down from $1,062,851 in 1991 to $ 502,432 for 1992. This reduction was due to harvest volumes being down from previous years due to wet weather and a reluctance of operators to cut Forest Service sales in the face of uncertainty about future supplies.

Ozark-St. Francis National Forests 25% Returns to Counties

County	Acres	Amount
Baxter	62,830	$ 43,052.77
Benton	8,197	5,616.80
Conway	6,764	4,634.87
Crawford	86,369	59,182.31
Franklin	103,722	71,073.04
Johnson	175,823	120,478.54
Lee	11,653	4,886.91
Logan	67,515	46,263.05
Madison	48,210	33,034.76
Marion	3,360	2,302.36
Newton	197,269	135,173.90
Phillips	9,548	4,004.14
Pope	184,804	126,632.56
Searcy	31,286	21,437.99
Stone	61,331	42,025.61
Van Buren	31,866	21,835.42
Washington	21,762	14,911.89
Yell	32,411	22,229.43
1992 Total	**1,144,750**	**$ 778,776.35**

Timber Sale Report

The Timber Sale Program Information Reporting System (TSPIRS) is a system designed to provide an annual report of the costs, revenues, resource benefits and local community effects of the timber sale programs of the National Forest System.

Results of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest timber sale program in Fiscal Year 1992 include:

☛Harvest of 32.7 million board feet of timber, valued at $2,511,215 from 6,305 acres, less than 1% of the total forest area. This compares to a harvest volume of 49.6 million board feet valued at $4,686,255 in Fiscal Year 1991. Harvest volume was down from previous years due to wet weather and a reluctance of operators to cut Forest Service sales in the face of uncertainty about future supply.

Operating expenses were down by $604,686 compared to Fiscal Year 1991, but because revenue was down by some $2 million, expenses of the timber program exceeded revenues for the first time ever. Revenues were also reduced because the average value of timber harvested was about $10 per thousand board foot less than in Fiscal Year 1991. This is a result of lower timber markets at the time the timber was sold and the effect of using less efficient harvesting methods.

☛ Operating expenses exceeded revenues by $997,221 compared to a $43,308 gain in Fiscal Year 1991.

☛Twenty-five percent of total revenues from timber ($502,432) was distributed to local governments for road and school programs. This is down considerably from the $1,062,851 returned in Fiscal Year 1991.

1992 Economic Account

Present Value of Benefits

Positive Effects	
Timber	$ 6,410,000[1]
Recreation	32,000
Wildlife	1,960,000
Total Positive Effects	**8,402,000**
Total Negative Effects	0
Total Present Benefits	**$ 8,402,000**

Present Value of Costs

Timber	$3,956,000[2]
Wildlife	412,000
Roads	1,550,000
Total Present Costs	**$5,918,000**

Present Net Value

Timber	$ 904,000
Other Resources	1,580,000
Total	**2,484,000**

1 $ 3,899,000 associated with future harvests, $ 2,511,000 associated with FY 92 harvests

2. $1,285,000 associated with future harvests, $2,671,000 associated with FY 92 harvests

The economic account provides an estimate of future benefits and costs associated with the current year's timber harvest. Also displayed are the positive and negative effects anticipated for wildlife due to the timber management program. Many species of wildlife, including most game species, benefit from appropriate manipulation of habitat through timber management. Mitigating measures are provided to enhance other species or to reduce adverse effects.

1992 Revenues and Expenses

I. REVENUE	
Timber Sale Receipts	$ 2,151,481
Purchaser Road Credit	318,531
Associated Charges	40,894
Interest and Penalties	312
Total Revenue	**2,511,218**
II. EXPENSES	
Timber Sale/Program Expenses	$2,564,421
Timber Program Expenses	655,232
Appeals and Litigation	56,948
General Administration Expenses	231,838
Total Expenses	**3,508,439**
III. LOSS BEFORE PAYMENT TO COUNTIES	**-997,221**
IV. PAYMENT TO COUNTIES	**502,432**

Timber Volume Harvested	32,685,000 BF
Timber Volume Under Contract	57,478,000 BF

BF = Board Feet

☛ **An estimated 355 jobs and $6,878,000 in income were generated in local communities as a result of the Timber Sale Program for 1992.** This is down from $8,279,000 for Fiscal Year 1991. In addition, the salaries for approximately 50 full-time employees and payments to seasonal and local contractors represent approximately two million dollars in income to the surrounding area.

☛ Federal income taxes estimated at $1,031,700 are directly attributable to the 1992 Timber Sale Program.

☛ The present net value of projected future benefits and costs of timber management on 6,305 acres harvested in FY 1992 is $2,484,000.

☛ Harvesting timber may also benefit other resource areas through enhanced wildlife habitat, opportunities to gather firewood and improved access for hunters, fishermen and other forest visitors.

☛ The timber sale program also helps to build and maintain a forest road system which provides access to protect the forest from fire, insect and disease attack.

During Fiscal Year 1992, thirty-nine administrative appeals were filed on project level decisions relating to timber management activities. Two lawsuits were also filed against the Forest Timber Program. Timber offered for sale during Fiscal Year 1992 amounted to 46.3 million board feet compared to 90 million board feet that had been planned for sale.

The effects of project level appeals and the two lawsuits were major factors in the shortfall. At the writing of this report, appeals continue to be filed against timber management activities on the Forest and appear to be one of the major challenges in accomplishing land management objectives.

A major objective of National Forest timber sale programs is to implement planned periodic renewal of the vegetation in patterns that produce multiple benefits and mimic those created by natural catastrophic events. It should also be noted that while both the cost and benefits, including revenues, are displayed in the Timber Sale Report, many of the costs displayed are land stewardship costs that would be incurred whether or not timber was sold or harvested.

Annual Accomplishments Compared to Forest Plan Objectives

The comparison of actual accomplishments by each fiscal year to the total activities proposed in the Forest Plan for the 10-Year period allows you to compare and see progress in reaching the 10-Year Plan objectives. Annual variations reflect changing priorities and changes in funding. The "% Plan" column reflects the percent of the total 10-Year objectivers accomplihed to date.

Activities	Units	LRMP Obj	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	% Plan
Recreation									
Use Administration	PAOT-D	na	1,100,000	1,200,000	1,300,000	1,210,000	1,300,000	1,300,000	--
Trail									
--Construction/Recons.	miles	98	12	12	7	27	16	12	88
--Maintanence	miles	na	103	157	173	229	123	53	--
Cultural Resources									
--Inventory	acres	120,000	4,829	5,843	12,418	19,832	48,029	35,749	106
--Evaluation	sites	na	1	1	2	15	20	9	--
Wilderness Admin.	PAOT-D	1,336,000	133,600	133,600	133,600	133,600	133,600	133,600	600
Wildlife and Fisheries									
Prescribed Burning	acres	8,000	2,067	2,683	2,473	1,368	3,000	693	154
Wildlife Opening Maint	acres	2,090	0	64	65	81	605	577	67
Food Plot Maintenance	acres	240	10	40	49	76	359	134	278
W.Life Opening Devlop.	acres	260	20	40	157	249	96	60	239
Food Plot Development	acres	60	10	13	20	890	34	15	1,637
Wildlife Stand Impr.	acres	1,080	43	67	0	0	66	94	25
Seeding and Planting	acres	200	15	22	324	390	756	92	800
Pond Construction	struc	320	48	64	69	64	38	11	92
Fish Cover Development	struc	100	100	10	26	108	18	26	288
Pond Fertilization	acres	1,200	50	10	84	169	140	110	47
Range									
Prescribed Burning	acres	20,000	363	0	0	643	126	40	6
Bush Hogging	acres	20,000	0	35	1,130	170*	440	122	10
Fertilization	acres	10,000	0	0	640	1,286*	63	109	21
Seeding	acres	10,000	0	0	60	107*	0	--	2
Fencing	miles	70	0	0	0	0	3	4	10
Pond Construction	struc	100	0	0	5	3	1	5	14
Corral Construction	struc	20	0	0	0	0	1	--	5

Timber *									
Timber Vol. Offered	MBF	600,000	62,100	60,300	67,200	50,100	43,500	46,300	55
Timber Vol. Sold	MBF	600,000	66,000	61,900	65,700	50,400	26,800	47,800	53
Reforestation									
--Hardwood	acres	20,600	3,100	2,000	2,074	1,447	1,709	2,008	60
--Pine	acres	29,000	3,146	4,167	2,621	2,798	2,610	1,855	60
TSI									
--Hardwood	acres	16,000	2,630	1,254	1,813	1,526	1,602	370	57
--Pine	acres	68,800	5,526	5,358	3,429	1,850	1,937	668	27
EAM Cutting (Ac. Sold)									
--Pine Clearcutting	acres	16,100	2,504	2,251	2,296	790	247	421	53
--Hdwood Clearcutting	acres	11,000	1,954	2,696	1,796	813	619	790	79
--Pine Seedtree	acres	8,200	910	239	863	874	296	734	48
--Pine Shelterwood	acres	3,600	0	0	0	0	23	87	3
--Hdwood Shelterwood	acres	4,000	0	65	170	132	251	190	20
UAM Cutting (Ac. Sold)									
--Pine Thinning	acres	51,000	4,893	3,461	3,917	5,973	2,974	4,525	51
--Hardwood Thinning	acres	13,000	258	1,665	1,299	1,307	1,166	2,353	62
--Hdwood Group Select	acres	42,000	20	30	551	679	371	4,405	14
--Pine Selection	acres	18,000	0	0	12	160	307	609	6
Exam. & Prescription	acres	1,100,000	102,000	99,004	59,113	58,782	47,237	60,648	39
Fuel Treatment									
Prescribed Burning	acres	50,000	1,529	2,340	1,750	3,842	2,614	2,692	30
Soil and Water									
Watershed Improvements	acres	250	39	66	58	28	34	44	108
Watershed Maintenance	acres	1,280	83	73	102	52	85	80	37
Soil & Water Inventory	acres	na	12,900	3,900	29,800	3,000	24,000	21,263	--
Road Work									
Reconstruction/Const.	miles	785	51	75	73	64	27	76	47
Lands and Minerals									
Mineral Leases	leases	2,606	260	1,021	1,195	702	660	520	167
Land Acquisition	acres	4,320	0	823	1,480	425	1,384	2,864	162
Land Exchange	acres	8,000	240	259	313	302	410	400	24
Boundary Location	miles	1,000	86	32	83	72	61	51	39
Landline Maintanence	miles	2,000	109	126	141	194	188	189	47
R of W Acquisition	number	na	18	29	25	14	21	15	--

TSI = Timber Stand Improvement
EAM Cutting Ac. Sold = Even-Aged Management Actual Acres Sold
UAM Cutting Ac. Sold = Uneven-Aged Management Actual Acres Sold
Timber Vol. Sold = Timber Volume Sold
Timber Vol. Offered = Timber Volume Offered
RofW = Right of Way
PAOT-D = People at One Time capacity (x) number of Days recreation site is open
na = not assigned
LRMP Obj. = Objectives set by Forest Plan
% Plan = % of Forest Plan accomplished to date
MBF = Thousand Board Feet
struc = structures

* Pine and hardwood selection areas are gross stand acres.
* Some acreage figures from previous reports have been corrected.
* LRMP Obj. column for harvest acres represents a weighted average of four years under the original Forest Plan and six years under the amended Forest Plan.
*LRMP Obj. column for reforestation and TSI is a weighted average of first two decades.

Monitoring and Evaluation Report Summary

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests annually monitor and evaluate programs and projects to determine whether these activities meet Forest Plan direction, objectives and requirements.

Monitoring helps us to identify needed plan amendments or corrections to improve resource management. It is an ongoing process documented in reviews by Forest integrated resource management teams, staff officers and district rangers.

Evaluations of this monitoring conducted during the Mid-Plan Review revealed that managers are following most management requirements during Forest Plan implementation through 1992. The report indicated a need to improve or modify some resource management requirements, improve compliance with some management requirements and to change some monitoring requirements to make them more effective.

In February 1993, the Forest made a series of corrections to improve monitoring techniques. Other corrections will occur later this year.

Overall, implementation of the Forest Plan is on schedule with good progress toward supplying the goods and services (objectives) shown in the Forest Plan. Although underfunding prevented meeting some objectives, actual accomplishments surpassed funded activities in other instances.

The actual funding received in Fiscal Year 1992 is compared with the Forest Plan budget in the chart below.

If you would like a copy of the entire Monitoring and Evaluation Report contact the Planning Staff at the Supervisor's Office. The address is listed on the back page of this report.

Activity	Forest Plan Budget*	Actual 1992 Budget
Timber	$ 2,586,000	$ 2,662,000
Wildlife	1,227,000**	836,000**
Recreation and Wilderness	2,739,000	3,062,000
Law Enforcement	158,000	197,000
Fire	718,000	679,000
Lands	724,000	511,000
Minerals	205,000	178,000
Engineering	2,570,000	3,255,000
Soil, Water and Air	421,000	607,000
General Admin.	1,616,000	1,661,000
Range	98,000	134,000
Planning	216,000	185,000
Total	**$13,278,000**	**$ 13,967,000**

* Figures rounded to nearest thousand.

** KV funds are included in these figures

An Invitation to Comment

This report is published annually by the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. You are invited to obtain this or any additional information on a project or about the Forest Plan by contacting the Forest Supervisor's Planning Office or any of the District Offices listed on the back page of this report.

Your ideas and comments about the management of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are very important to us. If you have something on your mind, or you want to be placed on the Forest mailing list and kept updated on various types of forest activities, let us know by filling out this form and return to the address on the front. *Thank-you!*

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please Print Clearly:

Name: _____

Organization or Company: _____

Street Address or P.O. Box: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

❑ Please add my name to the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests mailing list.

(fold)

FROM:

_____

_____

_____

Place
Stamp
Here

U.S. Forest Service
Atten: Public Affairs Office
605 West Main Street
Russellville, AR 72801

(fold)

Ozark-St. Francis National Forests Offices

Supervisor's Office
605 West Main Street
Russellville, AR 72801
(501) 968-2354

Sylamore Ranger District
P.O. Box 1279
Mountain View, AR 72560
(501) 269-3228

Buffalo Ranger District
P.O. Box 427; Jasper, AR 72641
(501) 446-5122

Bayou Ranger District
Rt. 1 Box 36; Hector, AR 72843
(501) 284-3150

Pleasant Hill Ranger District
P.O. Box 190; Clarksville, AR72830
(501) 754-2864

Boston Mountain Ranger District
P.O. Box 76; Ozark, AR 72949
(501) 667-2191

Magazine Ranger District
P.O. Box 511;Paris, AR 72853
(501) 963-3076

St. Francis Ranger District
Rt. 4 Box 14-A; Marianna, AR 72360
(501) 295-5278

Cass Job Corp Center
HC 63, Box 210; Ozark, AR 72949
(501) 667-3686

Persons of any race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or with any handicapping condition are welcome to use and enjoy all facilities, programs and services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Discrimination in any form is strictly against agency policy and should be reported to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

March 1993

U. S. FOREST SERVICE
P. O. BOX 1008
RUSSELLVILLE, AR 72811-1008

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
SOUTH FORNET SCIENCE LIBRARY
ROOM 496
ATHENS GA
30602